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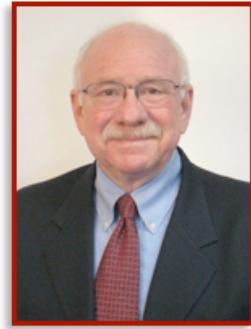
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A Word From Tim Downs - October 2012



Dear Friends,

At our recent Board meeting I was deeply aware of the shifts and changes that were taking place around us. We were meeting for the first time without Kathy Clark at the helm of TAP. Upon the announcement of my retirement, to take place in June 2013, the Board appointed a search committee to seek my successor. We introduced Laura Arnold, new to our staff. We agreed that our bylaws at the conference level and in the associations need to be changed to accommodate new protocols and procedures, to provide oversight of, training for, and authorization of ministry. Then we learned that Dick Sales, the father and founder of TAP, had died unexpectedly in a home accident.



All this is a little too much change for me, a man who for forty years has had his first cup of coffee out of the same mug each morning. I find change disconcerting, disorienting, and I have discovered through the years that the churches and ministries I have served do not welcome change any more easily than I do.

I have also found in these times that amid the disturbances, I need to pause, and in the pause often the words of the 46th Psalm rise in my heart: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam...the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." There are some things bigger than change, and yes, bigger than death itself.

Those things rest in the constancy of God, and our capacity to keep our eyes fixed on the bigger picture, the longer view. There is an inevitability to change in life. We all know the story of the ruler who asked the wise one of the court, "What one statement is eternally true?" The wise one answered, "This too shall pass."

I commend to your attention the film "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel," a delightful movie set in India. Sonny, the operator of the hotel, a true optimist, said, "Everything will be all right in the end. And, if it is not all right, it is not the end." I have confidence that we in the Southeast Conference have labored faithfully and well for our over sixteen years together. We have set in place the foundation of a strong witness. I have faith in the God of Jacob, our refuge, and in the vision that has guided us through some countless challenges - somehow, we always land on our feet, and keep walking through each challenge. In the end everything will be all right, "though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea" - for "if it's not all right, it's not the end."

I wish to you and us all God's peace



**Southeast Conference
UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST**

UCC News

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Headlines from the United Church of Christ

[JWM board nominates Linda Jaramillo for third term](#)

Board members for the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries decided unanimously Saturday morning to approve the Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo's nomination for a third and final term as executive minister.



I wish to you and to all God's peace,

Timothy C. Downs
Conference Minister

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

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Southeast Conference United Church of Christ - 1330 West Peachtree Street, Suite 350 - Atlanta, GA 30309 || Office: 800.807.1993, Fax: 404.607.7939
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